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ABSTRACT

Educational policy in France emphasizes international and global relationships as well as relevance of education to students' and society's needs. Educational priorities include increasing school attendance of two to four-year-olds, limiting class size to 35, and equalizing enrollments between urban and rural areas. There are three levels in the public education system: primary, intermediate, and secondary (lycee). The objective of primary education is to develop basic social and academic skills in students from six to 11 years old. Technological or pre-professional instruction is introduced on the four-year compulsory intermediate level. Graduates of a selective three-year lycee program may receive degrees of college preparatory baccalaureat, diploma of professional studies, or technician's diploma. Recently, universities and other institutions of higher education have endeavored to train students in public service responsibilities as well as academic knowledge and have instituted a degree in general university studies to meet this need. Educational research has focused on teacher training, interdisciplinarity of the sciences, and the nature of the school as a microcosm. Standardization of primary school curriculum and resultant textbook changes are ongoing programs of development. Future plans include increasing the role of preprimary schools and individualizing instruction on all levels. (AV)

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MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

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The educational movement in France

1974/1976

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1 — New policy directions.

a) *What are the new directions (if any) in present educational policy in your country as regards purposes and objectives, and the organization and contents of both formal and informal education?*

Present conditions in political, economic and social life have led to a determination of the changes which must be made in the conception of the educational system so as to reach a coherent, broad general project that can prolong previous development and at the same time mark out stages in change and allow for future adjustments.

The great development of information in all its forms has imposed in itself a new objective on the educational system. Young people must henceforth be prepared to grasp more varied and more rapid messages and become aware of the importance of the decisions to which these data would lead. The "educational" role that teaching must play is thus amplified by the development of cities and the growing complexity of social relationships and conflicts at the national and international levels.

The increasing technical burden of professional activity calls for more fully developed initial training and the creation of broad possibilities for continuous training throughout working life. One of the reasons for school failure is an insufficient correspondence between educational contents and the interests of young people; and when a new definition of education is sought, account must be taken of the interests of pupils, in the knowledge that the success of training is strongly linked to the motivations of the person receiving it.

The development of means of information, the importance of social relationships, the increasingly technical character of professional activity, social and cultural handicaps and the lask of interest of pupils in forms of teaching that are excessively foreign to the outside world are so many facts that must guide transformations in the present teaching system.

In order to set up system which ensures for all young people a basic education with increased intellectual, moral and professional dimensions,

it has first been necessary to specify once again the purposes for which the system has been responsible and be aware of the general objectives assigned to school training.

General objectives of education.

The Minister of Education, Mr Haby, has set up commissions inside the ministry to study the general objectives of the various levels of education and the more specific objectives of certain disciplines (physical sciences, human sciences, biological sciences, manual and technical education, aesthetic education) and to make suggestions for determining, for the school system, new aims better adapted to our time, but faithful to the profound purposes of educational action.

Drawing from the reports of these commissions as well as from working groups, Mr Haby, in order to redefine programmes at all levels, sent to the General Inspectorate an orientation note on the "general objectives of education" (1).

"Modern education must now strive to make the pupil acquire, not only certain forms of cultural knowledge, but also methods of thought and action, capacities (to be capable of...) and forms of intellectual, manual, social and other behaviour.

In his class, the teacher must play a twofold role. He must: make it easier to acquire knowledge, method and the logical process in each of the disciplines taught; and concentrate on using these gains to promote the development of capacities, attitudes and personnality traits extending beyond the field of the subject which is being taught.

This conception of teaching makes it necessary to define appropriate modes of appraisal. It is no longer enough for a pupil to show that he has acquired such and such a form of knowledge or can solve such and such a problem; he must also prove that he has acquired the methods and behaviour that are the objectives to be reached.

This appraisal means continuous observation of the pupil there where he is, with his attitudes, and following his development."

Among the general objectives proposed by education, priority has been given to those enabling a young person, after teaching, to define and place himself, reach autonomy and be open to change.

To define himself, the pupil must acquire intellectual resources, languages, techniques and methods of thought. In addition to these mental resources, there must be the development of the body, manual skills, sensitivity, creative faculties and character education.

For the pupil, to place himself with respect to others and with respect to the environment means discovering the natural, social, cultural, technological, economic and political milieu in which he lives, endeavouring to understand it, asking himself about cultural and ethical problems and those of daily life, and testing himself in his contacts with outside realities.

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(1) Les objectifs généraux de l'Education. *Le Courrier de l'Education*, No. 29, 19 April 1976, 16 p. Every teacher receives a copy of the *Courrier de l'Education*.

To reach autonomy is to be able to make professional choices, assume responsibilities, and use one's leisure time, especially by showing resistance to the mass media. Methods of personal work, whether individual or in groups, and in particular independent work, and the obligation to choose among the options will prepare one for this autonomy.

To be open to change is to be able to transform oneself with a view to constant improvement. This needs a capacity for analysis and synthesis, as well as the possibility of deciding and acting which is itself subordinate to the capacity for imagining and inventing.

These general objectives, those which do not refer to a specific discipline, have three dimensions: a methodological one, a cultural dimension and a practical one.

The methodological dimension means that a field of study must be seen, not as a sum of facts, but as a structured system which makes knowledge as a coherent whole.

In the cultural dimension, schooling must give all pupils a taste and a need for the pursuit of culture, for which each of them will then find ways and means of acting, in himself and his surroundings.

In the practical dimension, each discipline must prepare for daily life.

The various levels of teaching ensure continuity in educational action and the specific character of successive objectives.

Objectives of primary training.

Following the teaching given in infants' departments and pre-primary schools, whose aim is to foster the awakening of the child's personality, detect handicaps and compensate for inequalities, primary education has two purposes: the development of a human being and the elaboration of competencies which prepare him for later schooling.

In order to foster the child's development, primary schooling, while concerned with the identification and treatment of various handicaps, must help to produce conditions for ease in the behaviour of the body and its movements and must contribute to the refining of the child's sensitivity, the training of his character, and the development of the components of intellectual life, also arranging the stages that gradually lead from concrete intelligence to discursive reasoning.

In preparation for secondary school, pre-primary and primary school must ensure the acquisition of the instruments considered as basic apprenticeship (mastery of the written and spoken language, numeration and arithmetic, first mathematical concepts) and promote the processes of awakening which lead to an early equipment of ideas and concepts, such as ideas of time and space and other more specific ideas referring to disciplines or groups of disciplines. The awakening of the child's personality should also be sought through physical activities and sports, manual activities, artistic activities.

Objectives of schooling in the colleges.

The mission of a "college" is to give young people, after primary training, the elements of general culture which are indispensible for adult life and that of a citizen, and to permit the pursuit of studies in the framework of initial or continuous training.

Teaching in the colleges has several purposes:

— To consolidate the acquiring of instruments in primary education;

— To develop capacities for abstraction and reasoning;

— To reveal the spread of fields of knowledge and physical, sensory, manual and other activities;

— To enable the pupil to discover his own tastes and aptitudes;

— To provide cognitive and methodological support for general or professional studies which the pupil will be able to pursue later on.

One of the characteristics of secondary training in the colleges will be the important place given to the human and economic sciences, as well as to the physical and natural sciences. The child will study, in a specific way, ideas and phenomena that are already familiar to him; by an experimental approach, the young pupil will reach understanding of the physical and biological world surrounding him and the methods which make it possible to analyse it. However, fundamental attainments such as the use of the language will not be neglected; the perfection of written expression will remain the most pertinent objective at this level.

At the same time as the college endeavours to introduce pupils to deductive thinking and strict logical reasoning, it must give sufficient room to concrete intelligence. For a better balance with the cultural aspects of training in the colleges, stress will be laid on manual work.

Thus a substantial place will be assigned to manual and technical education during the first two years of teaching in the colleges. During the other two years which constitute the observation cycle, a wide range of options will complete the study of the disciplines which was previously undertaken. At least one of the options available consists of professional activities.

Teaching in the colleges will thus comprise several sectors of equivalent importance :

— Literature-languages (french language, living foreign language);

— Scientific training (mathematics, physics and natural sciences);

— History, geography, economics and civic education;

— Manual and technical education;

— Physical education;

— Aesthetic education.

Within each discipline or field of training, a balance must also be sought among the different abstract, concrete and practical components. The study programmes of all disciplines will be concerned with specifying practical aspects linked up to preparation for daily life.

«Considering the different capacities of pupils and the need to search out for all of them the means of acquiring basic training which would make a continuation of studies possible, a definition will be found, in each field of training and at each teaching level, for a strictly delimited and structured body of knowledge and know-how to be acquired by all pupils, which may be called «fundamental contents» (or «programme nucleus»). Supporting hours will be used to make up for insufficiencies in this domain.

The contents of the curriculum in the colleges must avoid excessive ambition; additional or marginal ideas unrelated to the objectives at this level should not be introduced.

Objectives of schooling in the lycees.

Secondary training, after the college, which leads to the « baccalaureat » for general education or to technical diplomas, has several objectives: finishing the adolescent's training, personalizing it gradually, account being taken of each pupil's potential, and preparing the pupil for his professional training, while cultivating his sense of autonomy and responsibility.

The common training must be centred on the concerns of young people: knowledge of the modern world, understanding of the social, natural or cultural environment, and preparation for their life as citizens and workers. Whether this training is given in general or in technical discipline, it will, in its twofold aspect of contents and methods, aim at the training of the mind in the broad sense of the term.

Common basic training does not, however, imply uniformity of teaching. It must at the same time foster the development of everyone's tastes and aptitudes. For this reason the forms of training will be distinguished as follows:

— Some, where technical and professional education prevails, will lead to professional diplomas (C.A.P. - B.E.P. - B.T.) or diplomas certifying a technician's qualification (baccalauréat);

— The others, giving more room to abstract disciplines, will lead to the secondary educational baccalauréat.

However, a range of options will ensure a better response to the personal interests shown by the pupils.

The essential aspect of this level of teaching will be that the pupil will be induced to show steadily greater autonomy and personal responsibility in his work, the development of his own knowledge, his appraisal of that knowledge, and the choice of his professional future.

Professional training, however specialized, aims at developing key qualities, that is, logical thinking, the capacity for establishing structures and organizing situations, the faculty of analysis, mastery of information and creativity. Pupils will learn to recognize what is identical or analogous in apparently different phenomena; they will become accustomed to adjusting from theory to practice and vice versa. Two matters of preoccupation must be added to the traditional objectives of technological education: development of the capacity for change and preparation of pupils for lifelong education.

With the objectives thus determined — general educational purposes, specific aims at different school levels, and the pedagogic intentions of each discipline — it was necessary to deduce there from the contents of teaching and the methods likely to attain these objectives. Working parties stimulated by the General Inspectorate of Public Education were asked to study the nature of the contents of the various training fields and to make proposals about the new programmes and instructions.

The first volume of the «Projets d'instructions sur les enseignements»

(draft instructions on the various forms of teaching) was published in June 1976. It contains first proposals regarding the contents of training for the preparatory cycle in schools and the observation cycle (6th and 5th classes). After a period required for concerting these measures, draft orders will be prepared in accordance with criticisms and suggestions.

b) *Are these new directions reflected in government laws and decrees or in other legal or official documents? If so, please give us a brief analysis of such documents and send to us the original texts whenever possible.*

These directions are to be found in the law on education of 11 July 1975 which reforms teaching and will be supplemented by a series of decrees and orders specifying means of application. Five draft decrees of application relating to the pedagogic organization of schools, colleges and lycees were made public by the ministry in March and in May 1976 (see § 2-a, p.33) and sent to representatives of teachers' unions and parents' associations for a broader concertation. These projets were submitted for examination by the Council for general and technical education and the Higher Council for National Education.

c) *In the present context, which priorities emerge in the matter of the development of education?*

Under the VIIth Plan, a priority action programme was adopted in favour of pre-primary education which plays an important part in making opportunities equal. A threefold effort is being undertaken:

— To ensure fuller school attendance among children from 2 to 4 years (in September 1976 the enrolment was estimated to be 82 % between 3 and 4 years and 28 % between 2 and 3 years, whereas it was 96 % for children between 4 and 5 years). The reform provides that all children aged 5 should be able to attend pre-primary school;

— To improve the conditions of reception by limiting to 35 the number of pupils in each class ; the previous figure was 50 pupils enrolled or 45 pupils present;

— To fight against inequalities of enrolment between rural and urban areas.

Another priority action has been undertaken:

— To promote technical education with a view to a better balance in the individual's training and to facilitate his adaptation to the working world. In this twofold perspective, manual and technical education has been set up starting with the 6th class, and a broad policy for the provision of equipment has been undertaken.

2 — Reforms and innovations in education.

a) *Have educational reforms been introduced or are they planned in accordance with the new directions of educational policy?*

The most innovating intentions contained in the law of 11 July 1975 are the following:

— importance given to pre-school training

— organization of a true «common stream» lasting four years for all children when they leave primary school

— importance given to manual activities throughout schooling, especially in the secondary training provided in the colleges

— broad possibilities as regards options as a response to the variety of individual interests

— secondary studies leading to the «brevet» of the colleges at the end of schooling in the colleges, and afterwards, either to diplomas certifying professional qualifications and possibly opening the way to higher training, or to a «bachelier's» diploma which can itself certify professional qualifications

— organization of support training for pupils having difficulties in the schools and colleges

— constitution of a true school community allowing for broad participation of all persons concerned, especially pupils, in the operation of the establishments

— opening of the establishments to as much autonomy as is compatible with the requirements of the public educational service.

The contents of this law, which is deliberately general in order to meet the requirements of the 1958 Constitution (article 34), is now supplemented, after a new phase of study and concertation, by decrees (1) and orders specifying ways and means and so permitting its application.

(1) They were published in the *Journal Officiel* de la République Française on 4 January 1977.

DECREES

Organization of training in public pre-primary and primary Schools.

Pre-primary school.

Pre-primary school takes children aged 2 to 6. Its objective is to awaken the child's personality, forestall school difficulties as far as possible, and identify handicaps.

Pre-school education undoubtedly helps to make chances more equal.

Primary education.

Pedagogic continuity is ensured between pre-primary school and primary school where children are admitted at the age of 6 and, by exception to the regulations, as from 5 years. Schooling comprises five levels organized in three successive cycles: the preparatory cycle, the elementary cycle and the middle cycle. Pupils are distributed in classes, but smaller groups drawn from one or several classes may bring pupils together for the differentiated action they need. In particular, this flexible system makes it possible to give support to pupils with difficulties.

At the end of the middle cycle each pupil receives a certificate of primary studies and begins the first year at the college, unless the teacher feels that he needs to repeat the second year of the middle cycle; in this case the family can appeal to a departmental commission.

Co-ordination in each school is ensured by:

(*a*) The council of teachers composed of the director and 11 teachers assigned to the school. It gives its opinion on the organization of the service. It is also consulted on problems concerning school life.

(*b*) The committee of parents, formed of elected representatives of parents, meets at least once every three months. The representative of the local community attends these meetings by right.

(*c*) The school council includes the council of teachers and the committee of parents, under the chairmanship of the director of the school. It must discuss the school's internal regulations and the possible organization of support action, and it is expressly consulted on means of mutual information between parents and teachers, nature classes, school transport, the supervision of children outside school activities, the cantines, peri-and post-school activities and school hygiene.

Whenever an examination of a pupil's situation or that of a group of pupils is required, an educational team meets composed of the director, the teacher or teachers and parents concerned and, possibly, the school psychologist, the re-educator, the doctor and the social worker.

Various orders will give the objectives to be reached at the end of each cycle and at the end of primary school, the organization and functioning of classes and smaller groups, and the minimum pedagogic standards for construction and provision of teaching material.

This organization of primary school, especially the organization of support teaching, will reduce the number of pupils who repeat classes and contend with inequality of chances.

It should be specified that psycho-pedagogic aid classes or groups can be organized to meet the needs of pupils with difficulties, especially at the direction of the commissions for special education provided for handicapped persons.

Organization of teaching and orientation in the colleges.

After primary school all pupils continue their schooling in the colleges for four years. The first two years constitute the observation cycle during which pupils receive the same teaching. During the next two years, the orientation cycle, at least one option, taken from a list including at least one form of pre-professional teaching, is added to the disciplines of the previous cycle.

Technological or pre-professional teaching included in the common stream or organized as options may involve special training periods and even be ensured in part in preparatory classes attached to lycees for professional teaching or in teaching given by approved professsionals.

In the colleges, the pupils are distributed without distinction among the classes set up for the duration of the school year. Groups of pupils from one or several classes can meet or be constituted independently of the organization by class.

Support action and activities for fuller study are organized for pupils who can benefit by them.

Autonomy is left to institutions in the distribution of pupils in classes and groups and in the adjustment of study programmes, especially with regard to the characteristics of the region.

The observation of pupils, which begins at the end of primary school, continues throughout schooling in the college; the pupils and their parents, especially at the level of the 3rd class, receive all useful information on possible subsequent training and their outlets.

During the last quarter of the observation cycle the family must indicate the option or options it has chosen. Likewise, during the last quarter of the orientation cycle, the family of each pupil expresses its wishes regarding the orientation desired. Within each cycle, there is repeating only at the request of the family.

At the end of the observation and orientation cycles, the proposals made by the councils of teachers, account being taken of the wishes of the families, are examined by the class council and notification is given to the families. If the latter disagree with a possible decision to have the pupil repeat at the end of the observation cycle or a dicision concerning later training taken at the end of the orientation cycle, they are able to appeal or ask that their child should take an examination.

At the beginning of the 4th class, that is, at the end of the observation cycle, the selection of options is left to the free appraisal of families.

The general objectives of schooling and the objectives resulting from it in each cycle and each field of training, the means of supporting action and

activities for fuller study, as well as the organization of the «college» diploma at the end of training received in the colleges are now under consideration.

Organization of training in the lycees.

After the college, secondary training continues in the lycees, which give four types of general or professional courses leading to different diplomas:

— The baccalauréat requiring three years of preparation, which can certify professional capacity in a specific technological field. The first two years of this course, called the «determination» cycle.

A pupil who, at the end of the determination cycle, has passed the first part of the baccalauréat goes on to the terminal class. Teaching in this year of specialization can, except for philosophy and physical education which would be compulsory, be composed exclusively of options, unlimited in number. In order to acquire professional qualifications, the pupil must combine several options in the same field. At the end of the year, he takes the second series of the baccalaureat.

— The technician's diploma delivered after three years of training.

— The diploma of professional studies («brevet d'études professionnelles» or B.E.P.) and the professional aptitude certificate («certificat d'aptitude professionnelle» or C.A.P.) prepared for in two years in the lycées of professional teaching which replace the present colleges of technical education. Pupils holding the B.E.P. or the C.A.P. can be authorized to continue their studies in a lycee to prepare for a technician's diploma or the baccalauréat.

The lycee's mission is not limited to initial training. It is open to all who have left their studies but wish to benefit by action in favour of social advancement or lifelong education. The lycees are also responsible for organizing professional adaptation for pupils who leave the educational system without a diploma or with a diploma which does not certify professional capacity.

The pedagogic autonomy of the lycees is equivalent to that of the colleges and concerns the distribution of pupils in classes and groups, the use of annual quota of hours of teaching, and the definition of certain subjects of study in view of the characteristic of the institutions and the region and the organization of optional activities.

The progress of each pupil's knowledge and capacities is verified throughout his schooling by the teachers under the responsibility of the head of the establishment. The final synthesis is transmitted to the family and to the pupil himself. Teachers must help the latter to appraise his progress in order that he may adjust his personal work and make his choices. For this purpose, documentation exists in each lycee on all the possibilities of school and professional orientation. Later orders will determine objectives, programmes and timetables for the common teaching, the optional teaching and the professional specialities.

Furthermore, decrees will determine the organization of the various secondary educational diplomas («Brevet» of the colleges - B.E.P. - C.A.P. - technician's «Brevet» - Baccalauréat).

Administrative organization of colleges and lycees.

It is planned that all lycees and colleges shall be made subject to the same legal and financial system. There are increased responsibilities for the head ot the establishment: as co-ordinator of all educational activities.

The principle of broad participation penetrates the administration of the establishments.

With this in view, the following bodies have been created or strengthened:

— The council of the establishment to assist the head of the establishment. It consists of members of the administration and services, elected representatives of the teaching and educational staff, elected representatives of parents, elected representatives of the pupils and persons prominent in the locality, especially a member of the general council and a representative of the commune where the establishment is located. On the proposal of the head of the establishment it votes the budget, votes the institution's internal regulations, deliberates on all questions of its competence in virtue of laws and regulations in force, and adopts the financial accounts.

— The councils of teachers, consisting of teachers of a class or a group of pupils, have the rôle of examining the school behaviour of each pupil in order better to recognize his aptitudes and guide him in his work and his choice of studies.

— The class councils, which meet once every three months under the chairmanship of the head of the establishment, consist of the members of the teaching staff of the class, the delegate of the parents of pupils in the class and the delegate of the pupils of the class. The following are also members of the class council when they are called upon to study the individual cases of one or several pupils in the class: the principal counsellor or the educational counsellor, the counsellor for orientation, the doctor for school health or the doctor for school and professional orientation or, if the institution has no doctor, the social assistant or the nurse.

— The teaching councils, which meet at least once a year under the chairmanship of the head of the establishment, include all teachers of a same discipline. They promote concertation between teachers (co-ordination, choice of textbooks, evaluation of school activities etc.). In the framework of pedagogic autonomy, threy can propose certain subject of study.

— Lastly, the educational team responsible for each pupil is composed of the pupil himself, his teachers and his parents. Concertation amongst its members will permit reciprocal information and a good development of the pupil's school career.

— The committee of parents (see page 34).

b) *During the period in consideration, have there been important innovations as regards structures, contents, methods or any other aspect of formal or informal education?*

The two school years since the promulgation of the law of 11 July 1975 (1975-76 and 1976-77) were not marked by important innovations. The first application of the reform's provisions will appear only at the

beginning of the school year in September 1977 when they will apply to pupils of the preparatory cycle in schools the 6th class in colleges.

On the other hand, the reform of higher forms training decided by the law of orientation of 1968 has been pursued in recent years. After the institutions provided for by the law were set up and began to function in 1970-71, the first «maîtrises» in sciences of management and the «maîtrises» in sciences and techniques created the following year, the reform of training was gradually worked out with the creation in October 1973 of the diploma of general university studies (« diplôme d'études universitaires générales » or D.E.U.G.) for the first cycle and the reorganization of the third cycle and the doctor's degree in October 1975. The framework of higher education is more difficult to define because, for most students, it is at the threshold between university studies and professional life; the boundaries of the reform of the second cycle of higher education have been determined by the ministerial order of 16 January 1976.

The saturation of traditional university outlets (teaching and research) has led the Secretariat of State for Universities to redefine the training given at this level in order to enable universities to reach the objective assigned to them by the law of orientation: «to meet the needs of the nation by providing it with cadres in all fields». Without giving up the training of teachers and research workers which remains one of their fundamental missions, the universities are asked to train workers assuming responsibilities in the widest possible variety of administrations of public services, public and private enterprises, those of local communities etc.

The order of 16 January 1976 specifies the aims of teaching in the second cycle : «to provide high-level scientific training which will prepare students for active life and the exercise of professional responsibilities». These studies, open to holders of the diploma of general university studies (D.E.U.G.), lead to two diplomas, each with its own purpose:

— The «licence» which, after a year of study, attests training in the elements of a discipline or a group of disciplines, or interdisciplinary training, or training with a professional objective;

— The « maîtrise », open to holders of the licence, leading, after a year of studies, to a diploma for fundamental scientific training or for scientific and technological training with a professional objective.

It is for the universities to take the initiative in defining the training they must submit to the Secretariat of State for Universities, which accepts or refuses proposals after consultation with the national council of higher education and research (Conseil national de l'enseignement supérieur et de la recherche or C.N.E.S.E.R.); this body gives its judgement after examining the report of a technical study group. These study groups appointed by the Secretary of State with reference to the nation's principal sectors of economic, social and cultural activity are composed of a majority of university people, at least a third of them being representatives of the professions. A threefold concerted movement should thus be set up: between teachers and students, between the university and the central administration, and between teachers and organizations representing employers, cadres and salaried employees; this concerted effort should make it easier for young people to take their place in

professional life. During the period preceeding the application of the reform schedules for the licence on 1 October 1977, all existing training will be reviewed by the universities, which are responsible for profoundly reconsidering both its contents and its form.

The Secretariat of State for Universities proposes, by this reform, to help students to a better mastery of their professional future.

It is for the universities to prove that they are capable of meeting the training needs of young people while asserting their own scientific value.

3 — Research in education.

a) *Are there trends to be noted in the development of research in education?*

The work of innovation which has, during these last years, been developing in all fields and especially in the teaching of mathematics and French is being supplemented today by evaluation and descriptive research—a deeper scientific study of the innovations previously introduced and evaluation of the results. The analysis of objectives extends to the field of French and the fabrication and use of objective tests which the Institut National de Recherche Pédagogique is helping to prepare.

One may note several main streams of research dominated by this general perspective:

— Evaluations in disciplines and especially in mathematics;

— The scientific description of the school as a micro-cosm and the efforts to explain various yields noted by an estimate of the respective weight of the different variables;

— The search for interdisciplinarity starting from the analysis of disciplinary objectives and with a view to better adaptation to the manifested needs of individuals and society. This research is particularly active in the scientific area: research on integrated scientific teaching; opening up of the school to the modern world by the introduction of trandisciplinary subjects of current interest (economics, social facts, etc.);

— Research on teacher training through the observations of the teaching given in relation to the objectives.

This change in contents is accompanied by a change in institutions.

The national Institute for educational research and documentation has disappeared and been replaced by the national Centre for pedagogic documentation (Centre National de Documentation Pédagogique) and the national Institute for pedagogic research (Institut National de Recherche Pédagogique). These new arrangements make for a clearer distinction between research and pedagogic documentation.

b) *To what extent have the results of research served to prepare educational policies and introduce reforms and innovation?*

Until 1974, pedagogic research, especially under the auspices of the research service of the Institut National de Recherche et de Documentation Pédagogiques, promoted changes in the instructions issued regarding French and mathematics teaching.

The influence of research on official reflection and the decisions being prepared by this section with regard to contents and structures, in keeping with the preparation of the reform now undertaken, can be appreciated only later on, when the reform has been carried out.

4 — Principal educational programmes.

What are, in your view, the principal educational problems which your government must now face and to which your special efforts in educational development will be given?

All attention is concentrated on the application of the modernization of the educational system, undertaken after the voting of the law of 11 July 1975 and centred on the fundamental principles of equality in justice and respect for the personality of each child.

However, some problems which result directly or indirectly from this must be solved.

An improved and more adequate professional training of teachers is under study.

There is also the creation of a true "common stream" in the colleges, which will provide the same type of education for all pupils leaving primary school and will, starting with the 4th class, offer one or several optional, supplementary forms of teaching.

The gradual establishment of the reform will mean instituting new preparing and disseminating teaching programmes and new instructions, which will certainly have repercussions on the contents and general conception of *textbooks*. This renovation of textbooks will be accompanied by the assumption of complete responsibility for them by the State, a decision taken under the reform of the first cycle, as of September 1977, starting with the textbooks of the 6th class, and in the following years those of the 5th, 4th and 3rd classes as the reform is applied. On this occasion, the Ministry of Education, in a circular of 9 July 1976, laid down certain pedagogical criteria to guide the selection of textbooks. Starting from the observation that they do not always meet the needs of pupils, and that they are often too voluminous and abundant, the circular states that a textbook, tool for the exclusive use of pupils, must be clear, easy to handle, and must not try to replace the teachers. It must avoid informing pupils and teachers in too restrictive

a way and must present "fundamental contents" clearly with emphasis on essential ideas. Additional material can be provided by annexed documents: files of texts, films, discs, tape recordings, index cards, etc., which would be available to pupils and teachers, especially in the documentation and information centres (Centres de Documentation et d'Information or C.D.I.) of the establishments.

The purpose of the national centre for pedagogic documentation is in part to supply pedagogic material usable for teaching (written documents, slides, films, tape recordings, radio and television broadcasts, programmes, correspondence teaching, etc.) and likewise, by giving teachers information which can reveal their scientific and pedagogic knowledge, to participate in the gradual institution of continuous training of schoolmasters and teachers.

This body has the fundamental task of putting into shape the pedagogic documents needed for the information and consideration of teachers undergoing the refresher training which the modernization of the educational system has made indispensable. These training periods begin in October 1976 in order to prepare for the 1977 school year.

5 — Prospects for the development of education.

According to you, what will be or continue to be the major trends in the educational movement in your country during the next two or three years?

The coming years will see the application of the reform promulgated by the law of 11 July 1975.

1. The selection of objectives has considerably broadened school education's field of action. Instead of being limited to transmitting knowledge, it also has the purpose of making pupils acquire methods of thought and action, capacities, and forms of intellectual, manual and social behaviour. Within each discipline or field of training a balance must be found between the various (abstract, concrete and practical) components of teaching.

2. In order to determine the outlines of a teaching which can make it possible to achieve these objectives, the Minister of Education has promoted a twofold concern for;

— Increasing the educational role of the pre-primary school in order to foster every opportunity for the young child's development and forestall the various handicaps as far as possible;

— Maintaining a common stream of teaching as long as possible in order to avoid the inequalities in school which the separate streams will not fail to create, and adapting the teaching as far as possible to the needs and capabilities of each pupil.

3. The concern for adapting teaching as far as possible to the rate of progress aptitudes and tastes of each pupil has led to consideration of certain measures:

— Support teaching is provided for in primary school and in the collèges to enable pupils with difficulties to adjust their knowledge to the class level, while other pupils (or the same ones, but for different disciplines) can take part in activities involving further study.

— While continuing the common training given in the collèges, the lycée would endeavour to make teaching gradually more personal so as to promote the development of all and give young people the means of choosing their orientation when the time comes.

For this purpose, the common basic training would diminish in the course of the years, while the share reserved for free options increase, with the result that, in the terminal class, teaching would be entirely according to options except for philosophy and physical activities compulsory for all.

The initiation into individual and group responsibility begun at the collège would be gradually developed during the years of the lycée, especially by making pupils participate in the appropriation, elaboration and evaluation of their own knowledge.

Thus the reform of the educational system will enable young people to adapt themselves to the new conditions of future society. It will give all children, whatever their background, the same basic training. It will ensure that social and cultural handicaps of which some children may be the victims will not lead them on to early failure. Teaching will be adapted to the rhythm of each pupil.

The reform will also ensure the improvement of each young person's level of training, as well as of his critical sense and his capacities for reflection and judgement.

Study programmes will be modernized, making room for economics and manual and technical education.

Lastly, young people, in agreement with their families, will be invited to select themselves, in addition to the compulsory courses, options which will develop their spirit of initiative and their sense of responsibility.